

The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII

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On 15 August 1261, the feastday of the Dormition of the Virgin, Michael VIII Palaiologos made his triumphal entry into Constantinople, restoring Byzantine rule there after 57 years of occupation by French and Italian Crusaders.¹ As he made his stately procession through the streets of the city which he was viewing for the first time, he must have been dismayed by the ruinous condition of the capital which had undergone grievous destruction during the previous decades.

Even before the arrival of the Crusaders at Constantinople in 1203, the city had suffered extensive damage in its recent past, having been twice ravaged by fires in the 1190s.² During the initial siege of July 1203, stones from Crusader catapults rained down on the Blachernai Palace and a battering ram broke through the fortification wall. Most serious, on 17 July Crusader soldiers torched houses adjoining the wall along the Golden Horn, and the flames spread from the Blachernai region along the shore as far as the Evergetes monastery.³ Further destruction was caused by a Greek mob which tore down Latin houses near the sea walls, including the Amalfitan Pisan quarters.⁴ The

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¹The basic monograph on Michael VIII is D. J. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258–1282: A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959). The book has been translated into modern Greek under the title 'Ο αυτοκράτωρ Μιχαήλ Παλαιολόγος καὶ ἡ Δύσις, 1258–1282: μελέτη ἐπὶ τῶν Βυζάντινο-Λατινικῶν σχέσεων (Athens, 1969).

²Niketas Choniates (*Historia*, ed. J. van Dieten [Berlin-New York, 1975], 445.29 [hereafter Nik. Chon.]) mentions a fire that destroyed the northern region of Constantinople during the first reign of Isaac II Angelos (1185–95). The fire of 1197 is known only from the iambic poem of Constantine Stilbes preserved in Venice, Marc. gr. 524; cf. J. Diethart, "Der Rhetor und Didaskalos Konstantinos Stilbes," Ph.D. diss. (Vienna, 1971), 103; J. Darrouzès, "Notes de littérature et de critique," *REB* 18 (1960), 186; A. M. Schneider, "Brände in Konstantinopel," *BZ* 41 (1941), 386 (hereafter, Schneider, "Brände").

³Nik. Chon. 545.45–50. Schneider, "Brände," 386f. On the events of 1203 and 1204, see also C. M. Brand, *Byzantium confronts the West, 1180–1204* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 234–69 (hereafter, Brand, *Byzantium*).

⁴Nik. Chon. 552.77–84.

worst disaster occurred in August 1203, when a company of Crusaders plundered a mosque outside the walls, near the shore of the Golden Horn, and then set fire to it and other buildings.⁵ The flames spread rapidly to the south and cut a wide swath across the eastern half of the city as far as the Sea of Marmara. The fire narrowly missed Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome, but did destroy the Myrelaion church, part of the Mese, and the Forum of Constantine.⁶ In the vivid words of Choniates, who lost his own palace in the conflagration,⁷ “porticoes collapsed, the elegant structures of the *agorai* toppled, and huge columns went up in smoke like so much brushwood.”⁸

During the difficult months of the joint reign of Isaac II and his son Alexios IV (1203–4), while the Latin army camped outside the walls, the Byzantine emperors were hard pressed to pay the debt owed to the Latins by Alexios IV. Consequently, Isaac was forced to confiscate sacred vessels and precious icon revetments, which he melted down for bullion to hand over to the Crusaders.⁹ The Greeks were also responsible for the destruction of one of the most famous monuments of the city, for a Constantinopolitan mob smashed the great 30-foot-tall bronze statue of Athena in the Forum of Constantine, possibly the work of the sculptor Phidias, in the belief that the goddess was beckoning to the Latin armies. During these months Western soldiers looted and burned churches and palaces in the city’s suburbs.¹⁰

The final capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders in April 1204 led to yet further devastation, for after their entrance into the city Latin soldiers set a fire near the

⁵Nik. Chon. 553–554. According to Choniates, the mosque, which was called the Mitaton, was located on the northern side of the city, on a slope leading down to the sea, near the church of St. Irene in the district of Perama. R. Janin (*Constantinople byzantine* [Paris, 1964], 258, hereafter cited as Janin, *CP byz.*) concludes, without solid evidence, that this mosque was the one that had only recently been built by Isaac II Angelos (1185–95) as a friendly gesture toward Saladin; cf. Letter of Innocent III (1210) in PL 216, col. 354B and the 13th-century Arab historian Abu Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, tr. Barbier de Meynard in *Recueil des historiens des Croisades. Historiens orientaux*, IV (Paris, 1898), 470–71. By coincidence, another mosque, located at the Praetorium, had been destroyed by a Byzantine mob in 1201; cf. Nik. Chon. 525.20–21. The best summary to date of evidence on the mosques of Constantinople is to be found in Janin, *CP byz.* 257–59, but there is need for further investigation of the subject.

⁶I am most grateful to Thomas F. Madden, a graduate student at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, who kindly gave me permission to read his unpublished paper “The Fires of the Fourth Crusade in Constantinople, 1203–1204: A Damage Assessment.” A shortened version of this article is scheduled to appear in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. Madden’s research provides extremely useful clarifications of the extent of the destruction caused by the three fires of 1203–4, and my article has benefited greatly from his conclusions.

For the fire at the Myrelaion, see C. L. Striker, *The Myrelaion (Bodrum Cami) in Istanbul* (Princeton, N.J., 1981), 28–29. Although Choniates states that the fire “did not spare the Hippodrome” (Nik. Chon. 555.51), excavations at the Hippodrome in 1927 discovered no evidence of any burned layer; see S. Casson, *Preliminary Report upon the Excavations carried out in the Hippodrome of Constantinople in 1927* (London, 1928), 3–8.

⁷Nik. Chon. 587.4–6.

⁸Nik. Chon. 553.14–556.64. Eng. tr. by H. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, Mich., 1984), 303f (hereafter, Magoulias, *Choniates*). Schneider, “Brände,” 387.

⁹Nik. Chon. 551.65–552.71 and 555.69–556.73. *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, ed. A. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1903), I, 6.22–7.1 (hereafter, Akrop.).

¹⁰Nik. Chon. 558.47–560.6. On the identity of the statue of Athena, cf. R. Jenkins, “The Bronze Athena at Byzantium,” *JHS* 67 (1947), 31–33, and “Further Evidence Regarding the Bronze Athena at Byzantium,” *BSA* 46 (1951), 72–74. The fact that the statue survived the fire of August 1203 demonstrates that the Forum of Constantine, although surrounded by flames, was not entirely destroyed, contrary to the evidence of Nik. Chon. 555.49.

Evergetes monastery that spread along the Golden Horn to the Droungarios Gate.¹¹ The destruction caused by three major fires in the course of thirteen months was extensive; the Crusader eyewitness, Geoffrey Villehardouin, commented that “more houses had been burnt in that city [of Constantinople] than there are in any three of the greatest cities of the kingdom of France.”¹² Although the accusation of Constantine Stilbes, a thirteenth-century metropolitan of Kyzikos, that the Latins burned thousands of churches¹³ is surely a gross exaggeration, there can be no doubt that many must have been irreparably damaged in the flames. The most recent assessment of damage, by Thomas Madden, concludes that one-sixth of the area of Constantinople was ravaged by fire, and between one-sixth to one-third of the city’s buildings were destroyed.

After the fall of the city on 13 April, French and Venetian soldiers began a looting spree that lasted for days. They plundered the homes of private citizens, palaces, and churches; with no regard for the sanctity or artistic quality of the liturgical vessels of “schismatic” Christians, they smashed the objects to extract the precious gems or melted them down for gold and silver, or used them as ordinary dishes. Likewise they stripped icons and church furniture of their precious metal revetments, and broke up the altar of Hagia Sophia.¹⁴

THE LATIN OCCUPATION OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1204–61)

It is likely that the number of Latins who settled permanently in Constantinople after 1204 was relatively small. Villehardouin states that the army which attacked the Byzantine capital numbered only 20,000 (against a population which he estimated at 400,000 or more),¹⁵ and after the capture of Constantinople many of these Crusaders dispersed to lands conquered in Greece. Villehardouin also stresses that in military encounters subsequent to their establishment in Greece and Constantinople the Crusaders were constantly outnumbered.¹⁶ At the same time the sources give the impression that substantial numbers of Greeks, especially courtiers, nobility, and higher clergy, left the capital to go into exile,¹⁷ and that the Latin authorities freely permitted their depart-

¹¹Nik. Chon. 570.33–35. Schneider, “Brände,” 387.

¹²E. Faral, *La Conquête de Constantinople* (Paris, 1939), II, ch. 247 (hereafter Villehardouin, ed. Faral) and *Joinville and Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades*, tr. M. R. B. Shaw (Baltimore, Maryland, 1963), 92 (hereafter, Villehardouin, tr. Shaw).

¹³J. Darrouzès, “Le mémoire de Constantin Stilbès contre les Latins,” *REB* 21 (1963), 81, no. 76 (hereafter, Darrouzès, “Stilbès”).

¹⁴Nik. Chon. 573f. Letters of Pope Innocent III sharply criticized the looting by the Crusaders; cf., esp., PL 215, col. 712b: “nec imperiales suffecit divitias exhaurire, aut diripere spolia majorum pariter et minorum, nisi ad ecclesiarum thesauros, et, quod gravius est, ad ipsarum possessiones extenderitis manus vestras, tabulas argenteas de altaribus rapientes, violatisque sacrariis, iconas, cruces et reliquias asportantes. . . .”

¹⁵Villehardouin, ed. Faral, ch. 251; tr. Shaw, 93. Robert of Clari (*The Conquest of Constantinople*, tr. E. H. McNeal [New York, 1966], 71 [hereafter, Robert of Clari, tr. McNeal]) states that the French deployed only 700 knights against 100,000 Byzantine horsemen! See also p. 76.

¹⁶Villehardouin, ed. Faral, chs. 347, 348, 350, 419, 429, 431, 459, 462, 482; tr. Shaw, 119, 137, 140, 149, 150, 155. Robert of Clari (tr. McNeal, 99) writes: “the Greeks . . . had still a hundred times as many men under arms as the French had. . . .”

¹⁷References to the flight of Greeks from Constantinople—Villehardouin, ed. Faral, ch. 246, tr. Shaw, 91: “All the Greeks who could manage to do so followed him [Mourtzouphlos] in his flight”; ed. Faral, ch. 266, tr. Shaw, 98: “About this time [May 1204] certain Greek nobles of the highest rank left Constantinople,

ture.¹⁸ We should also remember that a sizable percentage of the population (perhaps one-third, according to Madden's estimate) had been left homeless as a result of the three fires that swept the city in 1203–4, and were thus more likely to flee. As a result Constantinople became seriously depopulated.

Some abandoned mansions and houses were taken over by the Crusaders; in the words of Villehardouin, "Everyone took quarters where he pleased, and there was no lack of fine dwellings in that city. So the troops of the Crusaders and Venetians were duly housed. They all rejoiced . . . that those who had been poor now lived in wealth and luxury."¹⁹

At least 20 churches and 13 monasteries are known to have come under Latin control.²⁰ To give a few examples, Hagia Sophia became the cathedral of the Latin patriarch, the Blachernai church and the Mangana monastery came under the control of French canons, while Benedictine monks from Venice occupied the Pantepoptes and Peribleptos monasteries, and the Knights Templar took over the Xenon of Sampson.²¹ Constantine Stilbes reports that the iconostasis from the chapel of this hospice had holes cut in it and was used as a cover for the patients' latrine.²² One must also assume that the monastery now called Kalenderhane Camii was inhabited by Franciscan friars, on the evidence of the frescoes of St. Francis which were discovered in the chapel excavated at the southeast corner of the church.²³

There is limited evidence that the Latins removed some structural elements from abandoned or damaged churches for reuse in the churches which they took over. Thus, we know from a letter of Pope Innocent III that the new Latin patriarch Thomas Morosini took marble columns from the church of the Anastasis "for the decoration of the altar (*ad ornatum altaris*)" of Hagia Sophia.²⁴ One interpretation of the letter of Innocent

and a great number of them crossed over the straits to that part of the empire on the borders of Turkey." Robert of Clari, tr. McNeal, 77: [in July 1203] "the emperor [Alexios III] fled from the city with as many people as he could take with him"; p. 100: [after the fall of the city in April 1204] all the Greeks had fled and no one was left in the city but the poor people." Niketas Choniates describes the departure of his family together with other refugees (Nik. Chon. 589), and that of the patriarch John X Kamateros (593.56–60). He also comments that the Byzantines who escaped with Alexios III in 1203 were mostly nobles who had pursued a military career (612.46–47). Cf. also George Akropolites (Akrop. 10.13–14), who states that it was members of the most distinguished families who fled the captured capital.

¹⁸Cf. Akrop. 10.10–13; Nik. Chon. 631.8. Robert of Clari, tr. McNeal, 101: "those who wanted to go went away and those who wanted to do so stayed, and the richest of the city went away."

¹⁹Villehardouin, ed. Faral, ch. 251; tr. Shaw, 92–93.

²⁰R. Janin, "Les sanctuaires de Byzance sous la domination latine," *REB* 2 (1944), 134–84, supplemented by E. Dalleggio d'Alessio, "Les sanctuaires urbains de Byzance sous la domination latine (1204–1261)," *REB* 11 (1953), 50–61.

²¹T. S. Miller, "The Sampson Hospital of Constantinople," *ByzF* 15 (1990), 128–30.

²²Darrouzès, "Stilbès," 83, no. 89.

²³C. L. Striker and Y. D. Kuban, "Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul: Second Preliminary Report," *DOP* 22 (1968), 190–92; "Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul: Fifth Preliminary Report (1970–74)," *DOP* 29 (1975), 313.

²⁴Epist. XI.76 of Innocent III to Morosini, PL 215, col. 1392c: "Ab impetitione vero clericorum Sanctae Anastasis super columnis marmoreis quas de ipsorum ecclesia ad ecclesiam Sanctae Sophiae transtulisse diceris ad ornatum altaris, te reddimus absolutum." Madden suggests that the pope, confused by the similarity of names, may have intended to refer to the nearby church of St. Anastasia, which was destroyed in the second fire, rather than to the Anastasis which evidently survived the fire.

could be that the columns taken from the church of the Anastasis were small ones, removed perhaps from the templon or a gallery, and were used to construct a baldachin over the altar. The Byzantine altar of Hagia Sophia already had a baldachin, described by Robert of Clari as follows: "Around the altar were columns of silver supporting a canopy over the altar which was made just like a church spire."²⁵ Choniates states, however, that the Crusaders destroyed the altar and baldachin for the precious metal,²⁶ and thus the next Latin patriarch may have found it necessary to erect a new baldachin with marble columns.

The Latin church authorities also apparently did some rearrangement of the liturgical furnishings to better accommodate the needs of the Latin rite. Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos asserts, for example, that at the church of the Virgin of Pege, just outside the land walls of Constantinople, the arrangement of the altar was changed during the period of Latin occupation to conform with Latin rituals.²⁷ Xanthopoulos also remarks that the spring water at Pege lost its miraculous healing powers during the period of Latin profanation. Pachymeres relates that after the Byzantine recovery of Constantinople in 1261, the emperor Michael "restored to its previous condition the entire church [of Hagia Sophia] which had been altered by the Italians in many aspects. And placing in charge the monk Rouchas . . . he rearranged the bema and ambo and solea."²⁸ Pachymeres' remarks about the need for the Byzantines to rearrange the bema, ambo, and solea suggest that the Latins may have built a choir screen projecting into the nave in order to enlarge the space for the clergy and to accommodate the choir. The erection of such a barrier might have necessitated the use of marble columns, slabs, and the like taken from other churches.²⁹

The Latins also apparently undertook another major work of construction at Hagia Sophia. When they discovered the perilous condition of the structure of the building, which had been weakened over the centuries by earthquake tremors, the decision was made to construct a series of flying buttresses to shore up the walls of the church. E. H. Swift has theorized that this work was carried out by French engineers or architects.³⁰

It seems, however, that the new Latin conquerors were not sufficiently numerous to

²⁵ Robert of Clari, tr. McNeal, 106.

²⁶ Nik. Chon. 573.14–18 and 648.32–34: "They pulled down the ciborium of the Great Church that weighed many tens of thousands of pounds of the purest silver and was thickly overlaid with gold" (translation of Magoulas, *Choniates* 357). Elsewhere Choniates reports that the Crusaders removed the silver revetment from the bema railing, the pulpit, and the gates [of the templon?], and other adornments (Nik. Chon. 573.20–574.23).

²⁷ Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, *Περὶ συστάσεως τοῦ σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ζωοδόχου Πηγῆς*, ed. A. Pamperis (Vienna, 1802), 63: ἡ μουσικὴ τράπεζα . . . λατινικῶς διεσκευασμένη. It should be noted that the church of the Virgin at Pege is not included in the lists of churches known to have been under Latin control, as established by Janin and Dalleggio d'Alessio (see note 20, above), unless it is to be identified with the "monastery of the Panaghia" mentioned in a letter of Innocent IV of 1244 (see Dalleggio d'Alessio, 61).

²⁸ *Georges Pachymères. Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler with French tr. by V. Laurent (Paris, 1984), I, 233.8–11 (hereafter, Pachymeres, ed. Failler).

²⁹ I am very grateful to Dr. Christine Smith of Florence who discussed this question with me and made very helpful comments on ways in which the Latins might have altered the church furnishings.

³⁰ E. H. Swift, "The Latins at Hagia Sophia," *AJA* 39 (1935), 458–74; idem, *Hagia Sophia* (New York, 1940), 86–88, 111–19.

occupy and/or maintain all the houses and churches of the capital.³¹ The derelict buildings became inviting targets for vandalism, both officially authorized and otherwise. Bronze and lead were removed from roofs and melted down,³² while wooden houses were torn down for firewood.³³ Once roofing materials were removed, buildings became extremely vulnerable to the elements and must have deteriorated rapidly.

Much of the damage to the buildings of Constantinople should be attributed not to deliberate vandalism, but to neglect or what we would today call "deferred maintenance," since it was surely in the interests of the Crusader rulers to preserve the capital which they had inherited. But they were chronically short of funds, and hence could not afford to repair the already aging and decaying buildings. For example, the suburban church of St. John the Theologian at Hebdomon fell into ruin and by 1260 was being used as a stable. The remains of Basil II, who was buried there, had been removed from his tomb and dumped unceremoniously in a corner of the church.³⁴ The Nicaean emperor John III Vatatzes reportedly saved several churches from being dismantled for the sake of their valuable building materials; by sending money to the Latins he prevented their destruction of the churches of Blachernai, Rouphinianai, and St. Michael at Anaplous. He also granted funds for the restoration of the church of the Holy Apostles, which had been seriously damaged in an earthquake.³⁵ Not only houses and churches were damaged or fell into ruin, but also the monumental sculptures which adorned the Hippodrome and fora of Constantinople. Niketas Choniates devoted a special essay, usually called the *De Signis*, to a description of the bronze statues which were pulled down by the Crusaders and melted for coinage. Among the masterpieces destroyed were a Herakles attributed to the fourth-century B.C. sculptor Lysippos, and monumental figures of Hera, Paris, and Helen.³⁶ The anti-Latin diatribe of Constantine Stilbes repeated many of the charges made by Choniates in his *History* and in the *De Signis*.³⁷

³¹Cf., for example, Robert of Clari, tr. McNeal, 101: "And many [houses] they [the Crusaders] found and many they took and many were left [empty], for the city was very large and populous."

³²R. L. Wolff, "Politics in the Latin Patriarchate of Constantinople, 1204–1261," *DOP* 8 (1954), 278, and note 142. Marino Sanudo, *Fragmentum*, ed. C. Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes* (Berlin, 1873), 171: "[Baldwin II] vendidit et distribuit quasi totum quod habebat in Constantinopoli, discooperiendo palatia plumbea et vendendo."

³³*Nicephori Gregorae byzantina historia*, Bonn ed. (1829), I, 81.8–11 (hereafter, Gregoras, *Hist.*).

³⁴Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 175.12–26.

³⁵Addition of Theodore Skoutariotes to George Akropolites, ed. Heisenberg (Akrop.), 287.20–28.

³⁶Nik. Chon. 647–55; cf. A. Cutler, "The *De Signis* of Nicetas Choniates: A Reappraisal," *AJA* 72 (1968), 113–18, and E. Mathiopulu-Tornaritu, "Klassisches und Klassizistisches im Statuenfragment von Niketas Choniates," *BZ* 73 (1980), 25–40. The most recent article on antique statuary in Constantinople is by S. Guberti Bassett, "The Antiquities in the Hippodrome of Constantinople," *DOP* 45 (1991), 87–96. From Choniates' description it is impossible to determine the period of manufacture of these statues, which may have ranged in date from the Hellenistic to the late Roman era.

Michael Hendy has assigned a group of coins, termed by him "Latin imitative coinage," to a mint in Constantinople under Latin occupation; cf. M. F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire, 1081–1261* (Washington, D.C., 1969), 191–223. The excavators of Kalenderhane Camii discovered 23 scattered coins of the type attributed by Hendy to the Latin emperors; cf. C. L. Striker and Y. D. Kuban, "Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul," *DOP* 29 (1975), 318.

³⁷Darrouzès, "Stilbès," 50–100.

RESTORATION OF THE CITY BY MICHAEL VIII

Thus, when Michael VIII entered Constantinople in 1261 he had to face the reality that the capital was a desolate, depopulated city that was only a shadow of its former glory. In the words of Gregoras, “the Queen of Cities was a plain of desolation, full of ruins . . . , with houses razed to the ground, and a few ⟨buildings⟩ which had survived the great fire. For raging fire had blackened its beauty and ornamentation on several occasions when the Latins were first trying to enslave ⟨the City⟩.”³⁸ Sheep grazed in the precincts of the Stoudios monastery,³⁹ and there was plenty of land available within the city for the planting of grain.⁴⁰ Thus the reconstruction and repopulation of the capital was one of the emperor’s most pressing concerns throughout his reign.

The Walls of Constantinople

Michael’s pride in his recovery of Constantinople in 1261 was soon manifested by his issue of a new type of gold nomisma, whose obverse depicts an aerial view of the capital, schematically represented by a circular wall flanked by eighteen towers arranged in six groups of three each. Rising from among the towers is a bust of the Virgin orans.⁴¹ And indeed the repair of the fortifications proved to be one of the emperor’s top priorities; the walls were in such bad condition that even when the gates were closed it was easy to get in and out of the city.⁴² As a temporary measure, Michael immediately ordered that the height of the sea walls (which were lower than the land walls) be increased approximately two meters by the addition of wooden screens covered with leather hides; time did not permit construction with stone and mortar.⁴³ Some ten years later, in preparation for an anticipated attack by Charles I of Anjou, Michael had a second line of maritime walls built so that they matched the double fortifications of the land walls.⁴⁴ Clearly the Crusader attacks of 1203 and 1204 had made the Byzantines aware of the vulnerability of their maritime defenses.

³⁸Gregoras, *Hist.*, I, 87.23–88.5. Cf. also Gregory of Cyprus’ lament on the destruction of Constantinople (*Laudatio Michaelis Palaeologi*, PG 142, cols. 373D–376C).

³⁹Gregoras, *Hist.*, I, 190.11–12.

⁴⁰Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 251.19–23.

⁴¹P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London, 1982), 290f; *Georgii Pachymeris de Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis libri tredecim*, Bonn ed. (1835), II, 494.2–7 (hereafter Pachymeres, Bonn ed.). The reverse of the coin shows Michael VIII kneeling, supported by St. Michael (who stands behind him) and crowned (or blessed) by Christ. For detailed discussion of the iconography of this coin, see A. Cutler, “The Virgin on the Walls,” in his *Transfigurations: Studies in the Dynamics of Byzantine Iconography* (University Park, Pa., 1975), 111–41, esp. 111–15.

⁴²Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 215.26–27.

⁴³Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 251.6–14, 251.26–252.1–2. A. van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople. The Walls of the City and adjoining Historical Sites* (London, 1899), 188.

⁴⁴Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 469.8–10. A chrysobull of Michael VIII issued some time between 1267 and 1271 also refers to his reconstruction of the walls; cf. F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453*, pt. 3 (1204–1282), rev. P. Wirth (Munich, 1977), 99, no. 1941a. W. Müller-Wiener (*Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* [Tübingen, 1977], 314 [hereafter Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*]) doubts, however, that the second line of sea walls was ever built, while van Millingen (*Byzantine Constantinople*, 189) concludes that no trace remains of these walls because they were of poor construction or only temporary in nature.

The Palaces

Another of Michael's immediate concerns was where he should live. Even before he entered Constantinople he had ordered his general Alexios Strategopoulos to start refurbishing the imperial palaces in preparation for his arrival.⁴⁵ He selected for his principal residence the Blachernai Palace, which had been the preferred abode of the Komnenoi and Angeloi and of the Latin emperor Baldwin II, but was not able to move in immediately because of the appalling condition in which the Latins had left it. For not only had the complex been damaged by catapulted stones during the siege, but in the course of the Latin occupation the walls had become blackened with smoke and soot from poorly controlled fires and lamps, and the palace needed thorough cleaning and repainting.⁴⁶ During the renovation, which may have required as much as ten years,⁴⁷ Michael lived at the Great Palace which was also seriously dilapidated, although a number of its buildings, especially the churches, continued to be usable. Following the basic restoration of the Blachernai Palace, the emperor embarked upon an ambitious decorative program for its vestibule. In 1281/2 he commissioned frescoes of the Byzantine victory over the Angevins at Berat; he also planned a sequence of paintings depicting earlier events of his reign, but died before this second series could be executed.⁴⁸ K. Manaphes has proposed that Michael also established a library in a wing of the newly restored Blachernai Palace.⁴⁹ His evidence is a manuscript of theological florilegia now in Paris (Par. gr. 1115), whose colophon (fol. 306v) states that the manuscript was copied by a certain Leo Kinnamos in 1276, "during the reign of Michael VIII and his wife Theodora," and "deposited in the imperial library."⁵⁰

It has been suggested by some scholars that the palace now known as Tekfur Saray should also be assigned to the late thirteenth century, more specifically to the reign of Michael VIII. A. van Millingen⁵¹ was the first to propose the identification of Tekfur Saray with the "house of the Porphyrogennetos" mentioned by Kantakouzenos as existing by 1328.⁵² Müller-Wiener hypothesizes that it was constructed between 1261 and

Gregoras' *vita* of his uncle John of Herakleia preserves the interesting information that in his youth John was one of the laborers who worked with bricks and mortar to build or repair the walls of Constantinople during the reign of Michael VIII; cf. V. Laurent, "La personnalité de Jean d'Héraclée (1250–1328)," *Hellenika* 3 (1930), 303–4, and "La vie de Jean, métropolitaine d'Héraclée du Pont," *Ἀρχ. Πόντ.* 6 (1934), 39.23–24.

⁴⁵ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 215.10–11.

⁴⁶ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 219.5–9; Gregoras, *Hist.*, I, 87.20–23.

⁴⁷ Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 224.

⁴⁸ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 649.30–651.4; Eng. tr. C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire: 312–1453, Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972; repr. Toronto, 1986), 246 (hereafter, Mango, *Art*). S. Runciman's article on the "Blachernae Palace and its Decoration" (in *Studies in Memory of David Talbot Rice* [Edinburgh, 1975], 277–83) makes no mention of the fresco program commissioned by Michael VIII.

⁴⁹ K. A. Manaphes, Αἱ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει βιβλιοθήκαι αὐτοκρατορικαὶ καὶ πατριαρχικὴ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐν αὐταῖς χειρογράφων μέχρι τῆς ἀλώσεως (1453) (Athens, 1972), 55–57.

⁵⁰ For Greek text and English translation of this colophon, see J. A. Munitiz, "Le *Parisinus Graecus* 1115: Description et arrière-plan historique," *Scriptorium* 36 (1982), 55–56. Although Munitiz is suspicious of the historical validity of the colophon, its authenticity has been accepted in a recent study by A. Alexakis ("Some Remarks on the Colophon of the Codex *Parisinus Graecus* 1115," *Revue d'histoire des textes* 22 [1992], 131–43, esp. 143).

⁵¹ A. van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople* (London, 1899), 109–10.

⁵² John Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum Libri IV*, Bonn ed. (1828), I, 305.

1271 at the same time that the nearby Blachernai Palace was being restored,⁵³ whereas Mango proposes a date sometime between 1261 and 1291, identifying the “Porphyrogennetos” with Constantine Palaiologos, Michael’s third son, born in 1261.⁵⁴ It is possible that this is the palace where he was confined under house arrest in 1293 by Andronikos II.⁵⁵ Other architectural historians, however, argue that Tekfur Saray must be placed in the following century on stylistic grounds: Richard Krautheimer dates the structure to the first third of the fourteenth century,⁵⁶ while G. M. Velenis and R. Ousterhout present more detailed evidence for its construction after 1350.⁵⁷

Hagia Sophia

Another pressing consideration for Michael in 1261 was the restoration of Hagia Sophia in preparation for his coronation. He had already been crowned at Nicaea in 1259, but was anxious to be crowned a second time in Constantinople since he was all too conscious of his delicate position as a usurper. As mentioned above, the emperor commissioned a monk named Rouchas to prepare the cathedral for its return to the Byzantine rite, presumably removing church furniture added by the Latins, and restoring the ambo, solea, and bema to their original positions.⁵⁸ Pachymeres adds that the emperor “reconstructed other parts [of Hagia Sophia] with imperial funds. Then he restored the holy sanctuary to a more glorious state with <gifts of> sacred textiles and vessels.”⁵⁹ The basic refurbishing was completed very quickly in time for Michael’s coronation in the autumn of 1261, but beautification of the cathedral must have continued throughout his reign.⁶⁰ In 1265–66, for example, the patriarch Germanos III ordered the manufacture of a *peplos* depicting Michael as the “new Constantine” which hung between two porphyry columns at the west end of the church.⁶¹ The emperor in turn commissioned a representation of the three patriarchs named Germanos which was

⁵³ Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon* 244.

⁵⁴ C. Mango, “Constantinopolitana,” *JDAI* 80 (1965), 335–36, and idem, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1975), 275.

⁵⁵ Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 161.11–12: τὸν δ’ ἀδελφὸν συγκλείσας ἐνὶ τῶν κατὰ τὰ παλάτια βασιλικῶν οἰκημάτων ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ καθεύδων.

⁵⁶ R. Krautheimer and S. Ćurčić, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 4th ed. (Harmondsworth, 1986), 448.

⁵⁷ G. M. Velenis, Ἑρμηνεία τοῦ ἐξωτερικοῦ διακόσμου στὴ Βυζαντινὴ ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ, 1 (Thessalonike, 1984), 102–3, 106 note 2 and esp. 165 note 1; R. Ousterhout, “Constantinople, Bithynia and Regional Developments in Later Palaeologan Architecture,” in *The Twilight of Byzantium*, ed. S. Ćurčić and D. Mouriki (Princeton, 1991), 79.

⁵⁸ Cf. note 28, above.

⁵⁹ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 233.11–13. Michael’s restoration of Hagia Sophia was also praised by Manuel Holobolos (*Manuelis Holoboli orationes*, ed. M. Treu [Potsdam, 1906], 85.14–86.10 [hereafter Holobolos, ed. Treu]) in an oration traditionally dated 25 December 1261, but now reassigned by R. Macrides to 1267 (“The New Constantine and the New Constantinople–1261?” *BMGS* 6 [1980], 19 [hereafter, Macrides, “New Constantine”]).

⁶⁰ A chrysobull of Michael VIII, probably to be dated to 1272, enumerates the donations made by the emperor to Hagia Sophia; cf. D. J. Geanakoplos, “The Byzantine Recovery of Constantinople from the Latins in 1261,” *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History*, ed. F. F. Church and T. George (Leiden, 1979), 104–17, repr. in D. J. Geanakoplos, *Constantinople and the West* (Madison, Wis., 1989), 173–88.

⁶¹ Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 614.9–15; Macrides, “New Constantine,” 22–25.

displayed to the right of the Horaiai Pylai or “Beautiful Doors.”⁶² It is unclear whether this work of art was a mosaic, fresco, or textile. It has further been suggested by art historians such as J. Beckwith, O. Demus, and R. Cormack that the exquisite Deesis mosaic panel in the south gallery of Hagia Sophia was created at the behest of the emperor as a kind of thank offering soon after his entry into Constantinople. Cormack also raises the possibility that there was a small donor figure (presumably Michael VIII) in the lower part of the panel, which has long since been destroyed.⁶³

The Mosque

Fortification walls, palace, cathedral: these were logical priorities for Michael as he planned his program of restoration. It is more surprising to discover that within a year of the Byzantine recovery of the capital he had built a new mosque in Constantinople, perhaps to replace the Mitaton mosque burned down by the Crusaders in August 1203 or the Praetorium mosque destroyed by a mob in 1201. The Arab historian al-Maqrizi relates that in 1262 the emperor himself showed an envoy of the Mamluk ruler Baybars (1260–77) the newly constructed mosque, and the sultan subsequently sent gifts of gold candelabra, embroidered curtains, censers, carpets, aloes-wood, amber, and rosewater for use at the mosque.⁶⁴ Unfortunately al-Maqrizi gives no indication of the location of the new mosque. The rapid construction of this Muslim place of worship must be linked with the intensive diplomatic negotiations between Michael VIII and Baybars immediately following the Byzantine reconquest of Constantinople; these discussions resulted in a treaty (in 1261 or 1262) guaranteeing free passage through the straits for vessels

⁶²This phrase refers either to the west door of the church or the south door of the vestibule; cf. R. Macrides, “New Constantine,” 25 note 62.

⁶³J. Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople: An Introduction to Byzantine Art* (Greenwich, Conn., 1961), 134; O. Demus, “The Style of the Kariye Djami and its Place in the Development of Palaeologan Art,” in *The Kariye Djami, 4. Studies in the Art of the Kariye Djami and Its Intellectual Background*, ed. P. Underwood (Princeton, N.J., 1975), 144f. R. Cormack, in his article “Interpreting the Mosaics of S. Sophia at Istanbul,” *Art History* 4.2 (1981), 145–46, states his belief that the panel “was an imperial commission in 1261; it celebrated the reconsecration of S. Sophia as the Orthodox cathedral after the expulsion of the Latin clergy and formed part of the redecoration of the church at the coronation of Michael VIII Palaiologos.” In footnote 52 of his article he refers to a “forthcoming” article co-authored with E. Hawkins, entitled “The Deesis Mosaic and Late Byzantine Art,” but to the best of my knowledge this article has never appeared. I should note that it seems unlikely that a mosaic panel of such high quality could have been created during the two or three month period that elapsed between Michael’s arrival in Constantinople on 15 August 1261 and his coronation sometime that autumn.

It should also be pointed out that some art historians, following Thomas Whittemore (*The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia at Istanbul. Fourth Preliminary Report. Work Done in 1934–1938. The Deesis Panel of the South Gallery* [Oxford, 1952], 26–28), prefer to date the Deesis mosaic in the late 11th or 12th century.

⁶⁴E. Quatremère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l’Égypte écrite en arabe par Taki-eddin Ahmed-Makrizi*, pt. 1 (Paris, 1837), 177. See also Janin, *CP byz.*, 259. A text similar to that of al-Maqrizi was recently published by M. M. Tahar in an article entitled “La mosquée de Constantinople à l’époque byzantine d’après un manuscrit arabe (BN de Paris),” *Byzantiaka* 11 (1991), 117–27. This article should be used with caution, however, since Tahar does not seem to be aware of the Maqrizi passage published by Quatremère, nor of M. Canard’s article of 1937 (see following footnote), nor does he make any allusion to the mosque burned in 1203.

The mosque built at the instigation of Michael VIII may be the one about which the patriarch Athanasios I complained in a letter of the early 14th century; cf. A. M. Talbot, *The Correspondence of Athanasius I, Patriarch of Constantinople* (Washington, D.C., 1975), ep. 41.23–26 and note on p. 350.

transporting Mamluk merchants and envoys to the Crimea.⁶⁵ One of the concessions that Michael gained in return was the appointment of a Melkite patriarch in Egypt.⁶⁶

Public Works

Michael was praised by court orators for restoring all kinds of public buildings and facilities; unfortunately their language is extremely generalized and perhaps given to rhetorical exaggeration. Thus Manuel Holobolos spoke of his “beautification of public buildings, hippodromes . . . a teeming marketplace, theaters, law courts, streets, stoas, a multitude of baths and old age homes everywhere,”⁶⁷ while Gregory of Cyprus alluded to his construction of hospices and hospitals.⁶⁸ The emperor is also known to have founded a secondary school in the old orphanage of St. Paul.⁶⁹ In ca. 1270 Michael reconstructed the Kontoskelion port on the Sea of Marmara, surrounding the harbor with enormous stones, dredging it to increase its depth, building shipsheds, and placing iron gates at the entrance to the complex.⁷⁰ The harbor of Kontoskelion, identified by R. Janin with the port of Theodosios,⁷¹ was located at the southwesternmost point of the area destroyed by the fire of August 1203, and may have been damaged in the flames.

The Monasteries and Churches

Historians and orators alike praised Michael in fulsome but vague terms for his restoration of the churches and monasteries of the capital,⁷² but, with the exception of

⁶⁵ M. Canard, “Un traité entre Byzance et l’Egypte au XIII^e siècle et les relations diplomatiques de Michel VIII Paléologue avec les sultans Mamluks Baibars et Qala’un,” in *Mélanges Gauthier-Demombynes* (Cairo, 1937), 209–12. Cf. the comments of Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 237.1–239.5.

⁶⁶ Al-Maqrizi, ed. Quatremère, 177, reports that “Lascar [Michael VIII] députa vers le sultan, afin de lui demander un patriarche pour les chrétiens Melkites. On nomma à cette dignité Reschid-Kahhal (l’oculiste), qui fut envoyé vers l’empereur grec, accompagné de l’émir Fares-eddin-Akousch-Masoudi et de plusieurs évêques. Lascar les combla d’honneurs et de présents. . . . Akousch repartit pour l’Egypte, accompagné du patriarche dont il vient d’être fait mention.” According to V. Grumel, *La Chronologie* (Paris, 1958), 444, Gregory I, Melkite patriarch from 1243–63, was succeeded by Nicholas I from 1263–76. It seems likely that the Rashid Kahhal of Maqrizi is to be identified with Nicholas, and that the date of the beginning of his patriarchate should be moved to 1262.

⁶⁷ Holobolos, ed. Treu, 58.31–37.

⁶⁸ *Laudatio Michaelis Palaeologi*, PG 142, col. 377c.

⁶⁹ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 369.27–29. Cf. S. Mergiali-Falangas, “L’école Saint-Paul de l’Orphelinat à Constantinople: Bref aperçu sur son statut et son histoire,” *REB* 49 (1991), 237–46, and A. Failler, “Pachymeriana Nova. 3. L’école Saint Paul de l’Orphelinat,” *REB* 49 (1991), 190–93.

⁷⁰ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 469.23–471.1. This passage contains a puzzling phrase (lines 25–26), ἀργυρον χυτὸν ἐμβαλόντα, interpreted by V. Laurent as meaning that they deepened the harbor “en y jetant de l’argent fondu,” surely an impossibility. ἀργυρος χυτός usually means quicksilver or mercury, also illogical in this context. H. Ahrweiler has suggested to me the emendation of ἀργυρον to ἀργιλον, meaning “potter’s clay.”

C. Mango reports that two great towers of the harbor wall, which probably date to the early Palaiologan era, survived until the end of the 19th century; cf. his *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IV^e–VII^e siècles)* (Paris, 1985), 39–40 and note 15.

⁷¹ Janin, *CP byz.*, 228–29.

⁷² Gregoras, *Hist.*, I, 88.14–15: νεώς τε περιφράττειν, οἱ μὴ πω τελέως καταπεπτώκεσαν; Gregory of Cyprus, *Laudatio Michaelis Palaeologi*, PG 142, col. 377c: θείων ναῶν ἀπανταχοῦ τῆς Ρωμαίων ἀνοικοδομαί . . . οὐκ ἦττον δὲ δήπου καὶ τῶν φροντιστηρίων καὶ ἀσκητηρίων.

Hagia Sophia, we have little specific information on which churches required restoration and the extent of the repair work. Holobolos mentions the need to shore up church foundations, or provide new circuit walls or new roofs of tile or lead, or replace stolen furnishings and sacred vessels; he also specifically cites the Holy Apostles and Blachernai churches as being repaired by Michael.⁷³ Pachymeres adds that Michael established clergy at both these churches and assigned them choirs of paid singers.⁷⁴

The emperor took particular interest in two monasteries, which he restored and provided with *typika*. One of them was the monastery of St. Demetrios of the Palaiologoi, probably located on the Golden Horn near Seraglio Point.⁷⁵ This monastery, which had been founded by his ancestor George Palaiologos in the mid-twelfth century, was virtually destroyed during the Latin occupation.⁷⁶ Since it was a foundation closely connected with his family, it is understandable that Michael was especially concerned with its revival as a functioning institution.

A second monastic establishment restored by Michael was also a foundation of the Palaiologos family, first built by his grandfather the *megas doux* Alexios.⁷⁷ This was the monastery on Mt. St. Auxentios near Chalcedon, probably originally dedicated to Sts. Peter and Paul, but rededicated by Michael Palaiologos to his patron saint, the archangel Michael, and provided by him with a *typikon*.⁷⁸ Like St. Demetrios, this monastic complex had fared badly during the period of the Latin Empire.⁷⁹ The date of its restoration cannot be established precisely but was probably about 1280.⁸⁰ The monastery's close ties with its second founder are demonstrated by the fact that even after Michael's death and the repudiation of the Union of Lyons by the Council of Blachernai in 1283, the *hegoumenos* of St. Michael maintained a pro-Unionist policy.⁸¹

Although there is no firm proof, it is likely that Michael was also a major benefactor of the monastery of the Theotokos Peribleptos, since he was portrayed there in a now lost mosaic panel with his wife Theodora and son Constantine the Porphyrogenetos. All three figures were represented as standing on cushions and carrying scepters in their right hands. Michael held the *akakia* in addition.⁸² Cyril Mango has suggested that

⁷³ Holobolos, ed. Treu, 86.11–25.

⁷⁴ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 369.25–27.

⁷⁵ R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin, I; Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique, 3: Les églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1969), 92–94 (hereafter Janin, *EglisesCP*). The *typikon* was published by H. Grégoire, with a partial French translation, in "Imperatoris Michaelis Palaeologi *De vita sua*," *Byzantion* 29–30 (1959–60), 447–74.

⁷⁶ Grégoire, "Imperatoris Michaelis Palaeologi," 463.

⁷⁷ Cf. A. A. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgičeskich rukopisej* 1 (Kiev, 1895), 772; poem to St. Michael, ed. P. N. Papageorgiu, "Zwei iambische Gedichte saec. XIV und XIII," *BZ* 8 (1899), 676.69–72 (hereafter Papageorgiu, "Gedichte").

⁷⁸ R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 47–48. The *typikon*, which survives in part, was published by Dmitrievskij (see previous note), pp. 769–94.

⁷⁹ Papageorgiu, "Gedichte," 677.73–74: χρόνος δ' ἀπημαύρωσεν ἀφ' οὗ Λατῖνοι / τύραννον εἶδον τῇ πόλει Κωνσταντίνου.

⁸⁰ This is the date suggested by Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (as in note 78), 48, and J. P. Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1987), 249.

⁸¹ George Metochites, *Historia dogmatica*, I, 77, ed. A. Mai, *Patrum nova bibliotheca* 8 (Rome, 1871), 102.

⁸² The mosaic panel and its inscriptions are described by J. Leunclavius in his *Annales Sultanorum Othmanidarum* (Frankfurt, 1596), 137, and by C. DuFresne DuCange, *Familiae Augustae Byzantinae* (Paris, 1680), 233, who also includes an engraving. See also Mango, *Art*, 217; Janin, *EglisesCP*, 218–22.

the mosaic of the Tree of Jesse in the cloister (described by the traveler Clavijo) may also have been installed during Michael's reign.⁸³

There is a slight possibility that Michael VIII commissioned the redecoration of the *diakonikon* of Kalenderhane Camii, dated by C. L. Striker and Y. D. Kuban to the "early Palaiologan period."⁸⁴ The sole surviving mosaic panel is of the emperor's patron saint, the archangel Michael, and thus might seem to provide support for a linkage with Michael VIII; this argument is weakened, however, by the fact that angels were commonly portrayed in pastophoria decoration and the Michael panel is not in a prominent location.⁸⁵

To the best of my knowledge, no existing Byzantine source discusses Michael's plans for a burial site, although it seems logical that he would have been concerned to designate one of the churches he restored as a mausoleum for himself and members of the Palaiologan family, as John II Komnenos had done, for example, at the Pantokrator monastery. It is possible that he intended to be buried at one of the above-mentioned churches; one of the most likely candidates is the church of the Holy Apostles, which he is known to have restored, and in front of which he erected a great column topped with a statuary group of himself and St. Michael, discussed in the final section of this paper. Michael's emphasis on his identification with Constantine I, who was the first emperor buried at the Holy Apostles,⁸⁶ also supports this hypothesis.⁸⁷ It may also be that death (at the age of about 57) surprised him before he had an opportunity to make plans for his tomb. In any case, at the time of his death in 1282 (while on campaign in Thrace) he was so unpopular because of his policy of Union with the Latin church that he was refused the customary funeral rites of the Greek Orthodox church and was unceremoniously laid to rest in the monastery of Christ the Savior in Selymbria.⁸⁸ It was only after he died that his wife, Theodora Palaiologina, commissioned the construction of the church of St. John the Baptist at the Lips monastery which was intended as a mausoleum for members of the Palaiologan family; her *typikon*, however, conspicuously omitted any mention of a tomb there for Michael.⁸⁹

Churches Constructed by Private Patrons

A few members of the imperial family and the nobility also became engaged in the gigantic task of reconstructing the city in the years immediately following its recovery. There is no evidence, however, that this patronage was linked to Michael's rebuilding program; these private architectural commissions seem to have been the result of un-

⁸³ Mango, *Art*, 218. The passage from Clavijo runs as follows: "Outside the body of the church was a cloister beautifully adorned with different pictures, among which was represented the Tree of Jesse, of whose line the Holy Virgin Mary was descended; and this was of mosaic work so marvellously rich and well wrought that he who has seen it will not see anything so marvellous elsewhere."

⁸⁴ Striker-Kuban, "Work at Kalenderhane Camii," 192.

⁸⁵ This observation was made by R. Ousterhout. See p. 254, above and note 106, below, on the emperor's special devotion to the archangel Michael.

⁸⁶ See final section of this article also for discussion of Michael VIII as the "new Constantine."

⁸⁷ The suggestion that Michael VIII may have wished to be buried at the Holy Apostles was made by Robert Ousterhout in a private communication.

⁸⁸ Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 107.14–16.

⁸⁹ A. M. Talbot, "The Empress Theodora Palaiologina, Wife of Michael VIII," *DOP* 46 (1992), 303.

connected initiatives, on the part of individuals who were particularly concerned with the construction or restoration of monasteries, in the hope that such pious works would help ensure the salvation of their souls.

For example, sometime between 1261 and 1266 Maria, the sister of Michael VIII and wife of Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes, who took the monastic name of Martha,⁹⁰ founded the convent which came to be called Kyra Martha.⁹¹

In 1261 the original one-story monastic building of the Panagiotissa convent was constructed by an unnamed individual, probably the father-in-law of George Akropolites.⁹² In 1266 another story was added and the artist Modestos decorated the church with pictures, perhaps in mosaic.⁹³

The owner of the Souidas manuscript who left an invaluable record of his building activity in Constantinople under Michael VIII, identified by Kougeas as George Akropolites, records his restoration of a church of the Virgin which was dedicated in 1267.⁹⁴

George Akropolites was definitely responsible for the reconstruction of the monastery of the Anastasis in the 1260s or 1270s.⁹⁵ As George's son Constantine recorded, "after the conquest of Constantinople by the Italians it [the monastery] was once more reduced to ruins and almost completely destroyed, so as to have no expectation of reconstruction."⁹⁶ One example of the damage caused by the Latins was the aforementioned removal by the patriarch Thomas Morosini of marble columns from the church to decorate the altar of Hagia Sophia.⁹⁷ Akropolites described his restoration of the church as follows:

Since I did not think it right to neglect it . . . , I undertook the restoration, or rather reconstruction, of this church totally and with all my soul and spared no expense. . . . Therefore I spent a considerable sum of money to restore the fallen blocks of the holy structure, and properly braced and stabilized the roof, which was supported as it were on unstable <trusses> . . . and was in imminent danger of collapse. . . . I paid a salary of 1,000 gold pieces, which was counted out and weighed, to the men who excavated the dirt and cleared the area of debris, both the foundations and their surroundings. . . . Specially assigned secretaries recorded in detail on paper the gold pieces delivered to the supervisors of the project, as is customary for those who undertake large projects.

⁹⁰*Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, 9 (Vienna, 1989), no. 21389; A. Th. Papadopoulos, *Versuch einer Genealogie der Palaiologen, 1259–1453* (Speyer, 1938), no. 22. Janin (*EglisesCP*, 324) dates the foundation to the 4th quarter of the 13th century, but provides no evidence for this late date.

⁹¹V. Laurent, "Kyra Martha. Essai de topographie et de prosopographie byzantine," *EO* 38 (1939), 296–320; Janin, *EglisesCP*, 324–26.

⁹²D. Polemis, *The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (London, 1968), 83; S. Kougeas, "Ο Γεώργιος Ἀκροπολίτης κτήτωρ τοῦ Παρισίνου κώδικος τοῦ Σουίδα (cod. Parisin. graec. 2625)," *Byzantina Metabyzantina* 1.2 (1949), 61–74, esp. p. 62.

⁹³Cf. Kougeas, "Ο Γεώργιος Ἀκροπολίτης," 62, 73f.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 62f.

⁹⁵Pace Janin (*EglisesCP* 21), who dates the reconstruction to the 4th quarter of the 13th century, the monastery was clearly restored sometime between the recovery of Constantinople in 1261 and the death of George Akropolites in 1282. The construction work took place while George's son Constantine was a schoolboy, but unfortunately Constantine's date of birth is unknown. He became *logothetes tou genikou* in 1282, and thus may have been born ca. 1250–60. His father had assumed the same position at age 29.

⁹⁶H. Delehay, "Constantini Acropolitae, hagiographi byzantini, Epistularum manipulus," *AnalBoll* 51 (1933), 279.

⁹⁷Cf. note 24 above. As noted in the same footnote, it is possible that the columns were removed from the church of St. Anastasia, rather than from the Anastasis church.

When informed at the end of a year that the construction had already cost 16,000 gold pieces, Akropolites said that he no longer wanted any record kept of the expenses, “for I do not give this <money> to man, I offer it to God Who gave <it to me>.”⁹⁸

Another wealthy patron of the early Palaiologan era was the general Michael Glabas Tarchaneiotes, who apparently ca. 1263⁹⁹ made the initial restoration of the Pammakaristos monastery, which had suffered unspecified damage during the Latin occupation;¹⁰⁰ he and his wife Maria-Martha were to continue their patronage of the monastery for almost a half-century. The decoration of the complex all seems to date from the reign of Andronikos II: the frescoes on the south exterior wall of the naos were probably painted in the 1290s,¹⁰¹ ca. 1300 Glabas commissioned for one of the buildings in the complex a series of (now lost) history paintings depicting his military campaigns in the Balkans,¹⁰² and shortly after 1310 Maria erected a parekklesion decorated with mosaics as a memorial to her recently deceased husband. Glabas also founded, at an unknown date, a hospital for the indigent, perhaps as part of the Pammakaristos complex; either he or his wife Maria (who continued to support the hospital after his death) commissioned for the *xenon* an image of Christ surrounded by angels.¹⁰³ In addition, Glabas is known to have restored or founded the monastery of the Theotokos Atheniotissa at Constantinople.¹⁰⁴

The limited group of buildings commissioned in Constantinople by aristocratic patrons or members of the imperial family under Michael VIII pales in comparison to the churches and monasteries newly constructed or restored under his son, Andronikos II, by such *ktetors* as Theodora Palaiologina (monasteries of Lips, Sts. Kosmas and Damian), Theodora Raoulaina (Aristeine), Theodore Metochites (Chora), Nikephoros Choumnos (Theotokos Gorgoepekoos), Irene Choumnaina (Christos Philanthropos), and Michael Glabas Tarchaneiotes and his wife Maria-Martha (Pammakaristos). Of course the reign of Michael was less than half the length of his son's, but it also seems that during the 1260s and 1270s members of the elite were preoccupied with the basic tasks of restoring imperial rule in Constantinople, with religious conflict over the Union of Lyons (1274) and the Arsenite schism, and with the threat from Charles I of Anjou. The long rule of Andronikos II was evidently more tranquil and conducive to patronage of literature and the arts.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Delehay, “Constantini Acropolitae,” 279f.

⁹⁹ H. Belting, C. Mango, and D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos* (Washington, D.C., 1978), 12 and notes 42–43. Although J. Ebersolt and A. Thiers, *Les églises de Constantinople* (Paris, 1913), 229, 275, suggest that the naos of the monastery was built by Glabas, Mango (*op.cit.*, 3) dates the main church to the 12th century on both architectural and historical grounds.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. epigram no. 237 of Manuel Philes (*Manuelis Philae carmina*, ed. E. Miller, II [Paris, 1857], 243.63–65) and the Trinity College Document, ch. 26 (cited in Belting-Mango-Mouriki, *St. Mary Pammakaristos*, 41: “whose luxuriant beauty withered and disappeared altogether because of the evil conduct of the Italians.”)

¹⁰¹ Belting-Mango-Mouriki, *St. Mary Pammakaristos*, 108.

¹⁰² They are known from epigram no. 237, ed. Miller, *Manuelis Philae carmina*, II, 240–55. Cf. Belting-Mango-Mouriki, *St. Mary Pammakaristos*, 12f.

¹⁰³ Philes, epigram no. 98, ed. Miller, *Manuelis Philae carmina*, I, 280–82. The only clue to the date of foundation of the *xenon* is that Philes, writing probably in the early 14th century, states that Glabas established the *xenon* “long ago” (πάλαι): *πάλαι μὲν ὑπέθηκεν ὁ πρωτοστράτωρ, / Εὐσπλαγχνίας πένησιν ἐδράσας βάσεις* (p. 280, vv. 3–4).

¹⁰⁴ A. Failler, “Pachymeriana altera,” *REB* 46 (1988), 80, 83.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. the remarks of Ousterhout in his article “Constantinople, Bithynia, and Regional Developments,” 75 (cited note 57, above).

St. Michael's Column

It was probably toward the end of his reign that the emperor Michael decided to erect an extraordinary monument celebrating his restoration of the Byzantine capital. In front of the main door of the church of the Holy Apostles he commissioned the construction of a tall column surmounted by a very large bronze statue of the archangel Michael; at the feet of the angel was the kneeling figure of the emperor holding a model of the city of Constantinople in his hands and offering it to the archangel, his patron and namesake,¹⁰⁶ for protection. No trace of the column survives today; our information on the monument comes solely from the histories of Pachymeres and Gregoras,¹⁰⁷ from a poem at the beginning of Michael VIII's *typikon* for the monastery of St. Michael on Mt. St. Auxentios,¹⁰⁸ and from the accounts of travelers.¹⁰⁹ The sole pictorial image of the monument is found in an early fifteenth-century schematic drawing of Constantinople by the Florentine priest Cristoforo Buondelmonti who includes a sketch of the column (apparently constructed of stone drums) next to the Holy Apostles. Only one manuscript of the drawing (Venice, Marc. XIV 25) shows a figure atop the column, although Buondelmonti's text and the inscriptions on the various manuscripts of the drawing indicate that the figures of the angel and emperor were still in situ when he saw the column.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ The Byzantines viewed the archangel Michael as a special royal patron of all the emperors, but obviously emperors named Michael were specially devoted to him; cf. N. Teteriatnikov, "The Devotional Image in Pre-Mongol Rus," in *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*, ed. W. C. Brumfield and M. M. Velimirović (Cambridge, 1991), 33.

¹⁰⁷ Pachymeres (Bonn ed., II, 234.16–22) describes the statuary group when recounting the destruction caused by the earthquake of 1296: καὶ ὁ ἐκεῖσε χαλκοῦς ἀνδρῖας τοῦ ἀρχιστρατήγου, ὁ ἐπὶ κιονώδους μὲν ἐρηρεισμένος τοῦ ἀναστήματος, ἐς πόδας δ' ἔχων τὸν ἀνακτα Μιχαὴλ τὴν πόλιν φέροντα κἀκείνῳ προσανατιθέντα καὶ τὴν ταύτης φυλακὴν ἐπιτρέποντα, ὁ τοιοῦτος οὖν ἀνδρῖας καὶ ἡ ἀνὰ χειρὸς τῷ βασιλεῖ πόλις, ὁ μὲν τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀφαιρεῖται, ἡ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἐξολισθαίνει, καὶ πρὸς γῆν ἄμφω πίπτουσι. For English translation, see Mango, *Art*, 245–46. Gregoras (*Hist.*, I, 202.8–13) also describes the statue in the context of the damage caused to it by the earthquake: κατὰ τοῦτον μέντοι τὸν χρόνον συνέβη γενέσθαι σεισμὸν τῶν πάντων μεγίστων, ὑφ' οὗ πολλαὶ μὲν τῶν μεγάλων οἰκιῶν, πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν μεγάλων νεῶν οἱ μὲν ἐπεπτώκεσαν, οἱ δὲ διερράγησαν. ἐπεπτώκει δὲ καὶ ὃν πρὸ τοῦ νεῶ τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων ἐπὶ κίονος ἔστησε τοῦ ἀρχιστρατήγου Μιχαὴλ ἀνδριάντα Μιχαὴλ βασιλεὺς ὁ Παλαιολόγος, ὁπότε τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐγκρατὴς ἐγεγόνει· ὃν αὖθις Ἀνδρόνικος βασιλεὺς, ὁ ἐκείνου παῖς, ὡς εἶχε σχήματος, ἐπεσκεύασε τε καὶ ἀνεστήλωσε.

¹⁰⁸ Papageorgiu, "Gedichte," 676.54–55: πρὸς τοῦτο γὰρ σε καὶ κίων ὑποῦ φέρει / ναῶ παρσεσὼς τῶν σοφῶν Ἀποστόλων. Since the poem, which prefaced the *typikon* for the monastery of St. Michael, mentions the column of St. Michael, and the *typikon* is usually dated ca. 1280, the column must have been constructed before 1280.

¹⁰⁹ An Armenian pilgrim of the 14th–15th c.—S. Brock, "A Medieval Armenian Pilgrim's Description of Constantinople," *REArm* n.s. 4 (1967), 87: "outside [the Holy Apostles] stood a high column, on top of which is elevated, in bronze, the angel Gabriel, and Constantine the King."

Zosima the Russian deacon (1419–20)—G. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 184–86: "In front of the great church doors [of the Holy Apostles] stands a very high column. A terribly large angel stands on the column, holding the scepter of Constantinople in its hand. Emperor Constantine stands opposite it, holding Constantinople in his hands and offering it to the protection of this angel."

The Florentine priest C. Buondelmonti (ca. 1414–22)—J. P. A. van der Vin, *Travellers to Greece and Constantinople*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1980), 668: "Près de l'église des Saints-Apôtres se dresse la cinquième colonne, dont le sommet porte un ange de bronze et Constantin à genoux."

¹¹⁰ G. Gerola, "Le vedute di Costantinopoli di Cristoforo Buondelmonti," *SBN* 3 (1931), 268f, 275f. The plate of the Venice drawing is found between pp. 252 and 253; see also van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, frontispiece (cited note 51, above).

The column of St. Michael has attracted little attention to date, although it is a monument that should be of considerable interest to art historians.¹¹¹ For in commissioning a work of such large scale the emperor Michael was clearly reviving a genre of monumental art which was characteristic of the early centuries of Byzantium. Columns such as those of Constantine I, Theodosios I, and Justinian were familiar landmarks of the capital throughout its history, but after the early seventh century the tradition of constructing honorific columns seems to have fallen out of favor.¹¹² Niketas Choniates reports that Andronikos I planned to erect a bronze statue of himself on a column,¹¹³ but apparently he was deposed before the project came to fruition. In the case of Michael VIII's monument, not only is the construction of the column remarkable for the late thirteenth century, but also the manufacture of an over life-size bronze statue is unparalleled in Byzantium for this period. Cyril Mango has recently concluded that the last firmly documented Byzantine bronze statue was a gilt bronze equestrian figure of Niketas, a cousin of the emperor Heraklios, erected atop the Tetrakionion in the Forum of Constantine in the early seventh century.¹¹⁴ Hence it seems clear that Michael VIII was deliberately reviving a late Roman sculptural form when he commissioned the statue group, with the important distinction that the thirteenth-century sculpture focused not on the emperor, but on the image of the archangel, with the emperor reduced to a kneeling figure at his feet.

Because of the unique character of this statue group as a work of late Byzantine sculpture, it has been suggested that in fact the emperor may not have commissioned a new creation, but that the group was fabricated from old statues, a Nike, for example, being reworked into the figure of the archangel.¹¹⁵ It does indeed seem doubtful that a Byzantine artist of the early Palaiologan period would have had the technical ability to cast such a statue; but it is possible that the original model could have been sculpted by a Greek, who then called on the expertise of a Western craftsman to produce the finished bronze version. Or a team of Western sculptors and bronzecasters might have been invited by the emperor to combine their efforts. If indeed Michael turned to the West to find suitable artists, Italy seems to be the most likely source,¹¹⁶ although even there relatively little bronze sculpture was executed in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. But some works were being made in this medium, in Orvieto,¹¹⁷

¹¹¹A. Grabar, in *L'empereur dans l'art chrétien* (Paris, 1936), 111 and 177f, and J. Ebersolt, in *Les arts somptuaires de Byzance: Etude sur l'art impérial de Constantinople* (Paris, 1923), 131, discussed the sculpture group briefly, but did not dwell on the implications of its manufacture in the late 13th century.

¹¹²Janin, *CP byz.* 73, states that Justinian I was the last emperor to have an honorific column erected in his honor, but C. Mango has found evidence that shortly before his overthrow the emperor Phokas (602–610) erected a column of marble drums just east of the church of the Forty Martyrs. He evidently planned to place his statue atop the column, but was forestalled by death. Cf. C. Mango, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IVe–VIIe siècles)* (Paris, 1985), 31; *Chronicon Paschale*, Bonn ed. (1832), I, 698.20–699.2; Nikēphoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, *Ecclesiastical History*, 8.32 (PG 146, cols. 121B–D).

¹¹³Nik. Chon. 332.35–37.

¹¹⁴C. Mango, "Epigrammes honorifiques, statues et portraits à Byzance," in *Aphieroma ston Niko Sborono I* (Rethymno, 1986), 30. The bronze statues of the empress Irene and her son Constantine VI described in the *Patria* (*Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, ed. T. Preger, pt. 2 [Leipzig, 1907], 181–82 note 56, and 278 note 202) are not otherwise attested.

¹¹⁵Henry Maguire and Dale Kinney first made this suggestion to me.

¹¹⁶I am greatly indebted to Christine Smith and Debra Pincus who suggested parallel monuments in Italy and provided pertinent bibliography.

¹¹⁷A. F. Moskowitz, *The Sculpture of Andrea and Nino Pisano* (Cambridge, 1986), 2–3.

in Perugia,¹¹⁸ in Venice,¹¹⁹ and most notably the life-size seated statue of St. Peter in the Vatican, attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio and dated to ca. 1285–1300.¹²⁰ A few decades later, in the early 1330s, Andrea Pisano prepared the wax models for the south doors of the Baptistery in Florence, which were then cast in solid bronze by a bell founder summoned from Venice.¹²¹ Thus the technology was available in Italy, if the Byzantine emperor was willing to pay for it.

In rendering himself offering a model of the city to his patron saint, the emperor was surely imitating the mosaic in the vestibule of Hagia Sophia that depicts the emperor Constantine presenting a model of the newly constructed city of Constantinople to the Virgin Mary.¹²² Michael, as the restorer of the Byzantine capital, was anxious to stress the parallel between the original founder of Constantinople and himself, its second founder; he relished the epithet of the “new Constantine” as we have already seen on the *peplos* donated by Germanos III to Hagia Sophia.¹²³ Michael was also called “ὁ νέος Κωνσταντῖνος” by orators,¹²⁴ in inscriptions,¹²⁵ in colophons and marginal notes on manuscripts,¹²⁶ and on lead seals.¹²⁷ And is it sheer coincidence that Michael gave the name Constantine to his third son, born shortly after his triumphal entry into Constantinople in 1261?¹²⁸

As decades passed, confusion seems to have developed over the identity of the two figures in the statue group atop the column. An anonymous Armenian traveler of the fourteenth or fifteenth century thought the archangel was Gabriel, and called the emperor Constantine. The fifteenth-century Russian pilgrim Zosima and the Florentine Buondelmonti made the same mistake about the identity of the emperor.¹²⁹ One suspects that Michael Palaiologos, who so longed to be compared with Constantine the Great for his work in reconstructing Constantinople, would not have been upset by this popular misconception.

¹¹⁸ E.g., the Fontana Maggiore of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, dated to 1278; cf. K. Hoffmann-Curtius, *Das Programm der Fontana Maggiore in Perugia* (Düsseldorf, 1968).

¹¹⁹ E.g., the bronze doors at San Marco, one of which bears an inscription stating that it was made by the Venetian goldsmith Bertucius; cf. O. Demus, *The Church of San Marco in Venice* (Washington, D.C., 1960), 181.

¹²⁰ A. M. Romanini, *Arnolfo di Cambio*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1980), 181, and plates 206–9; M. Salmi, “Il problema della statua bronzea di S. Pietro nella basilica vaticana,” in *Commentari* 11 (1960), 22–29.

¹²¹ Moskowitz, *Sculpture*, 7–8, 177–80.

¹²² See, for example, J. Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople: An Introduction to Byzantine Art* (Greenwich, Conn., 1961), 97 and fig. 123. One coin type of Michael VIII also represented him holding a model of a city; cf. P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London, 1982), 302, no. C14.

¹²³ Cf. above p. 251 and note 61. Pachymeres relates that Germanos was the first to proclaim Michael as “the new Constantine”; Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 391.5–12.

¹²⁴ E.g. Gregory of Cyprus, *Laudatio Michaelis Palaeologi*, PG 142, cols. 345, 384D.

¹²⁵ Leunclavius, *Annales Sultanorum Othmanidarum*, 137, and DuFresne DuCange, *Familiae Augustae Byzantinae*, 233 (cited note 82, above).

¹²⁶ For an example of this epithet in a colophon, see, for example, the text of the colophon of Par. gr. 1115 in Alexakis, “Some Remarks,” 131 (cited note 50, above). For marginal notes, see Ph. Evangelatou-Notara, *Συλλογή χρονολογημένων “σημειωμάτων” ελληνικών κωδίκων ιγ’ αἰ.* (Athens, 1984), 88, no. 290; 100, no. 335.

¹²⁷ E.g., G. Zacos and A. Vegler, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 1.3 (Basel, 1972), no. 2756bis.

¹²⁸ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 247.16–17.

¹²⁹ Cf. note 109, above.

CONCLUSION

After Michael VIII regained control of Constantinople in 1261, he faced several monumental tasks in addition to his normal responsibilities for the conduct of foreign and domestic policy: moving the central government administration back to the capital, and repopulating and restoring a city devastated by fire, neglect, and the ravages of war and foreign occupation.¹³⁰ Although some private patrons contributed to the reconstruction of Constantinople through the rebuilding of damaged churches and monasteries or the erection of new structures, these seem to have been modest endeavors. It was the emperor who initiated and paid for the major works of rehabilitation: the walls; the Kontoskelion harbor; the Blachernai Palace; the churches of Hagia Sophia, the Holy Apostles, and Blachernai; and the monastery of St. Demetrios. Michael's emphasis was clearly on the repair or reconstruction of essential urban facilities (walls, harbor), landmark structures intimately connected with the emperor (the Blachernai Palace), and the principal churches of the city, which were focal points of worship, pilgrimage, and imperial ceremonial. Almost all of his endeavors involved the restoration or rebuilding of previously existing structures; significantly the only firmly attested brand-new construction was the column of St. Michael commemorating his *renovatio* of the capital.¹³¹ It should be noted that virtually all the structures whose rebuilding is specifically cited by the sources were situated in parts of the city unaffected by the great fires of 1203–4. This is in part due to the fortunate circumstance that the three fires, as devastating as they were, spared the city's most important buildings, which were damaged rather by the assaults of siege weapons, and by deliberate vandalism, poor maintenance, outright neglect, or abandonment. Only Holobolos' very generalized allusion to Michael's "beautification of public buildings, hippodromes . . . marketplace, theaters, law courts, streets, stoas, . . . baths and old age homes"¹³² suggests that the emperor also engaged in rebuilding the urban amenities located in the region north and south of the Forum of Constantine which was evidently totally razed by the fire of August 1203. Thus, it would seem that Michael's primary goal was to restore the major buildings of the capital to their pre-1204 condition; once this phase of reconstruction was complete, there would be a shift to a new trend, under his son, Andronikos II, of private commissions, often on a deluxe scale, for the construction/renovation and decoration of churches and monasteries.

Dumbarton Oaks

¹³⁰ Ironically, at the same time that Michael was devoting his efforts to the repairs of the damage caused by Crusaders, he was promoting a religious policy that favored unification with the Latin church.

¹³¹ The mosque may also have been a new construction, or may have been built on the ruins of an old one.

¹³² See note 67 above.